

STRONG AND STEADY

By HORATIO ALGER, JR.

CHAPTER II.—(Continued.)

At five o'clock on the afternoon of the day after Mr. Conrad's death, Mr. Drummond entered the house, which was on the opposite side of the street from the store. This was the supper hour, and supper was ready upon the table.

A single glance was sufficient to show that Mr. Drummond was not a man to indulge in luxurious living. There was a plate of white bread, cut in thin slices, a small plate of butter, half a pie, and a plate of cake. A small pitcher of milk, a bowl of coarse brown sugar, and a pot of the cheapest kind of tea completed the preparations for the evening meal. Certainly there was nothing extravagant about these preparations; but Mr. Drummond thought otherwise. His attention was at once drawn to the cake, and instantly a frown gathered upon his face.

"Are you going to have company to-night, Mrs. Drummond?" he asked.

"Not that I know of," answered his wife, in some surprise.

"Then why is it that you have put both pie and cake on the table?"

"The cake is a cheap kind."

"No cake is cheap, Mrs. Drummond. I take it you used eggs, butter and sugar in making it. You are probably not aware that all these articles are very dear at present. Until they get lower we need not have cake, except when company is present. Take away the cake, if you please. You can save it for Sunday evening."

"I am afraid it will be dried up by that time."

"If it is dry, you can steam it. I have continually to check you in your extravagant tastes. Cake and pie, indeed! If you had your way, you would double my household expenses."

Mrs. Drummond rose from the table, and meekly removed the offending cake. Just then the third and only other member of the family entered.

This was Joshua Drummond, the only son, now eighteen years of age, though he looked scarcely more than sixteen. He inherited his father's meanness, but not his frugality. He was more self-indulgent, and, though he grudgingly spent money for others, was perfectly ready to spend as much as he could get hold of for himself.

CHAPTER III.

Over Joshua, Mr. Drummond had less control than over his wife. The latter gave way meekly to his unreasonable requisitions; but Joshua did not hesitate to make opposition, being as selfish and self-willed as his father, for whom he entertained neither respect nor affection.

In silence he helped himself to bread and butter, and in due time accepted a piece of pie, which Mrs. Drummond made larger at the expense of her own share. Finally Mr. Drummond remarked:

"I've had a telegram to-day from Willoughby."

"From Willoughby?" repeated his wife.

"Isn't that where your cousin, William Conrad, lives?"

"He doesn't live there any longer. He's dead. The funeral is to be day after to-morrow."

"Shall you go?"

"Yes. It will cost me considerable; as much as five dollars or more; but he was my cousin, and it is my duty to go," said Mr. Drummond, with the air of a man who was making a great sacrifice.

"He was rich, wasn't he?" asked Joshua, becoming interested.

"Probably worth a hundred thousand dollars," said his father, complacently.

"I should think he might have left me something," said Joshua.

"He never saw you, Joshua," said his mother.

"Joshua stands a better chance of getting a legacy from one who doesn't know him than from one who does," said Mr. Drummond, with grim pleasantry.

"He leaves children, doesn't he?"

"One child—a boy. Let me see, he must be fifteen by this time. It's likely I will be appointed his guardian. I'm the nearest relative."

"Will he come here, then?" asked Joshua.

"Very probably."

"Then I hope you'll live better, or he won't stand it."

"When I require any advice from you, Joshua, I will apply for it," said his father.

Joshua inwardly hoped that his father would be appointed guardian, for he hoped that in this event it would make a difference in the family living; and, besides, if his cousin were rich, he meant to wheedle himself into his confidence, in the hope of future advantage.

Jacob put off going to Willoughby till the morning train on the day of the funeral. The next day, therefore, he started, taking with him in his valise a lunch of bread and meat tied up in a piece of brown paper. Shortly after his arrival, he called at the house of mourning.

"I am Jacob Drummond of Stapleton, the cousin of the deceased," he explained to Nancy, who opened the door to admit him. "Is my young relative, Mr. Conrad's son, at home?"

"Yes, sir," said Nancy, taking an inventory of his features, and deciding that he was a very disagreeable looking man.

Mr. Drummond was ushered into the parlor, where he had a little chance to look around him before Walter appeared. Mr. Drummond rose at his entrance.

"I suppose you don't know me," he said; "but I was your father's nearest living relation."

"Mr. Drummond, I believe."

"Yes, Jacob Drummond of Stapleton. You have probably heard your father speak of me?"

"Yes, sir," said Walter.

"I came as soon as I could after getting your telegram. I left my business to take care of it. I wanted to offer you my sympathy on your sad loss."

Mr. Drummond's words were kind, though the reference to his sacrifice in leaving his business might have been as well left out. Still Walter could not feel as grateful as he wanted to do. Somehow he didn't fancy Mr. Drummond.

"You are very kind," he said.

"I mean to be. You know I'm your nearest relation now. I truly feel for you in your desolate condition, and though it may not be the right time to say it, I must tell you I hope, when the funeral is over, you will accompany me home and share our humble hospitality. Mrs. Drummond joins me in the invitation."

"I have not had time to think of future arrangements," said Walter; "but I thank you for your invitation."

"My son Joshua, too," said Mr. Drummond, "is longing to make your acquaintance. He is older than you, but not much larger. Joshua is eighteen, but he will make a very pleasant companion for you. Let me hope that you will accept my invitation."

"Thank you, Mr. Drummond; I will consult my friends about it."

"I wonder how much I could venture to ask for board," thought Mr. Drummond. "If I am his guardian I can fix that to suit myself. A hundred thousand dollars would make me a rich man. That is, I could in a moment get it without injuring the boy."

Mr. Drummond asked a few more questions about Mr. Conrad's sickness and death. Walter answered them, but did not think it necessary to speak of his losses by the mining company. Mr. Drummond was a stranger, and not a man to inspire confidence. So Walter told as little as he could. At length the visitor, having exhausted inquiries, rose.

"I shall be here to-morrow," he said. "I shall return to Stapleton after the ceremony. I hope you will make up your mind to go back with me."

"I could not be ready so soon," answered Walter, doubtfully.

"I can wait till next day."

"That will not be necessary, Mr. Drummond. I shall have no difficulty in making the journey alone, if I conclude to accept your kind invitation."

Mr. Drummond shook out his hand sympathetically, and at length withdrew. As he went down the avenue, he took a backward glance at the handsome mansion in which his cousin had lived.

"That boy owns all that property," he said, half enviously, "and never worked a day for it. I've had to work for all my money. But it was foolish to spend so much money on a house. A third the sum would have built a comfortable house, and the rest might have been put at interest. If it turns out that I am the boy's guardian, I think I shall sell it. That'll be the best course."

CHAPTER IV.

The funeral was over. Mr. Drummond, as indeed his relationship permitted, was one of the principal mourners. Considering that he had not seen Mr. Conrad for five years preceding his death, nor during that time communicated with him in any way, he appeared to be very much overcome by grief. He kept his eyes covered with a large white handkerchief, and his movements indicated suppressed agitation. He felt that this was a tribute due to a cousin who had left over one hundred thousand dollars. When they had returned from the grave he managed to have a word with Walter.

"Have you decided to accept my offer, and make your home beneath my humble roof?" he asked.

"There has been no time to consult with my friends here, Mr. Drummond. I will let you know next week. I thank you at any rate for your kindness."

"Do come, Walter," said his cousin, twisting his mean features into an affectionate smile. "With you beneath my humble roof, I shall want nothing to complete my happiness."

Jacob Drummond went back to Stapleton ignorant of the state of Mr. Conrad's affairs and regarding Walter as a boy of great wealth.

When the will was opened it was found to bear date two years back, before Mr. Conrad had plunged into the speculation which had proved so disastrous to him. He bequeathed all the property which he did possess to Walter, with the exception of five hundred dollars, which were left as a legacy to his faithful housekeeper, Nancy Forbes. At the time the will was made, its provisions made Walter heir to a large fortune. Now it was quite uncertain how things would turn out. Clement Shaw, the village lawyer, an honest and upright man, was made executor, being an old and tried friend of the deceased.

With his Walter had a long and confidential conversation, imparting to him what he knew of his father's mining speculation and its disastrous result, with its probable effect in accelerating his death.

"I knew something of this before, Walter," said Mr. Shaw. "Your father spoke to me of being largely interested in the Great Metropolitan Mining Company; but of the company itself and the extent to which he was involved I knew nothing."

"I think my father must have been very seriously involved," said Walter. "It may, perhaps, swallow up the whole property."

"Let us hope not. Indeed, I can hardly believe that your father would have ventured in so deep as that."

"He had every confidence in the company; he thought he was going to double his money. If only a part of his property was threatened, I don't think it would have had such an effect upon him."

"I will thoroughly examine into the affair," said Mr. Shaw. "Meanwhile, Walter, hope for the best! It can hardly be that the whole property is lost. Do not be too anxious."

"Do not fear for me on that account," said Walter. "I always looked forward to being rich, it is true, but for all that I can bear poverty. If the worst comes, and I am penniless, I am strong, and can work. I can get along as well as thousands of other boys, who have to support themselves."

Walter did not speak boastfully by any means, but in a calm, confident way, that argued a consciousness of power.

"Yes," said the lawyer, regarding him attentively, "I think you are right there. You are just the boy who can make his own way; but I hope you will not be obliged to do so."

"I am young and strong. Nancy spent her best years in my father's service, and she is no longer young. It is right that she should have some provision. Besides, my father meant her to have it, and I want to carry out his wishes."

"This is all very generous, Walter; but I am afraid it is inconsiderate. It would not be your father's wish to provide even for Nancy, however faithful she may have been, at the expense of his son."

"It is right," said Walter. "Besides, Mr. Shaw, I find that Nancy had laid up six hundred dollars, which she had deposited in my father's hands. That also must be paid, if there is enough to pay it; if not, I will take it upon myself to pay whenever I am able."

"You're an excellent boy, Walter," said Mr. Shaw. "I always had a good opinion of you, and I find it is more than deserved. I honor you for the resolution you have expressed, though I cannot quite agree with you about the five hundred dollars. As to the debt, that must be paid, if there is money enough to pay it. But we can leave the further discussion of this question for the present. Now let us consider what is to become of you in the meantime. You were at the Essex Classical Institute, I believe?"

"Yes, sir."

"You would like to go back again, I suppose."

"No, Mr. Shaw. It is an expensive school, and while it is uncertain how my father's affairs will come out, I should not feel justified in going there."

"Perhaps you are right. Of course, you cannot stay here, and keep house by yourself. I would invite you to my own house, but my wife is an invalid, and I have to consider her in the matter."

"Thank you, Mr. Shaw; but I think perhaps I had better accept the offer of Mr. Drummond of Stapleton. He invites me to make my home at his house, and for the present, perhaps, that will be the best arrangement."

Nancy was much troubled at the thought of parting from Walter, whom she had known from his infancy; but a situation was immediately offered her in the village, and Walter promised to take her as his housekeeper whenever he had a home of his own, and this comforted her, although it was likely to be a long time until then, since our hero was at present but fifteen.

He wrote a brief letter to Stapleton as follows:

"Dear Drummond—

"I will accept the invitation you were kind enough to extend to me, for the present, at least, and will come to Stapleton about the middle of next week. You are the only relation of my father that I know of, and I think it would be his wish that I should go to you. If it should be inconvenient for you to receive me at that time, please write me at once. Yours respectfully,

"WALTER CONRAD."

In return, Walter received a letter couched in the most cordial terms, in which Mr. Drummond signed himself, "Your affectionate cousin." He was delighted, he said, to think that he was about to receive, under his humble roof, the son of his revered and lamented cousin. He himself met Walter at the depot.

"I am delighted to welcome you to Stapleton, my young friend," he said, shaking his hand cordially. "In the affliction which has come upon you, let me hope that you will find a haven of rest beneath my humble roof."

Walter made suitable acknowledgments, and proceeded to walk beside Mr. Drummond to the house which he termed humble.

It did not deserve that name, being a substantial two-story house, rather ugly, architecturally, but comfortable enough in appearance.

"That is my humble dwelling," said Mr. Drummond, pointing it out. "It is not equal to the splendid mansion in which you have been accustomed to live, but my worldly circumstances differ widely from those of your late lamented parent. That is my son, Joshua, who is looking out of the front window. I hope you may become good friends, considering how nearly you are related."

(To be continued.)

Toothblacks.

"As we have toothblacks so they've got toothblacks in the Sunda Islands," said a traveling man.

"What is a toothblack?"

"Don't you know? A toothblack is an old woman with a pot of black paint, a gold leaf book and a set of vegetable brushes. From hut to hut she passes, and for a small fee—a yam, a bunch of bananas, three coconuts—she paints the Sunda Islander's teeth a glistening black—all but the two front teeth. These she glids. And the Sunda Islander thereafter goes about with a self-conscious smile revealing a truly knock-me-down dental display, a black and gold symphony. It is a common trick among the semi-civilized to color the teeth. In Macassar dark brown is the popular hue, and in Japan among the unenlightened classes the teeth of wives are always painted black. In such countries the toothblack is an institution. She goes from house to house as full of gossip as a barber."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Painted Retorts.

It is not every one who enjoys a joke at his own expense. The judge who pointed with his cane and exclaimed: "There is a great rogue at the end of my cane," was intensely enraged when the man looked hard at him and asked, coolly:

"At which end, your honor?"

A friend of Curran's was bragging of his attachment to the jury system, and said:

"With trial by jury I have lived, and, by the blessing of God, with trial by jury I will die."

"Oh," said Curran, in much amazement, "then you've made up your mind to be hanged, Dick?"—Tit-Bits.

Cruel.

Gunner—So the celebrated poet married Mrs. Penner, the short-story writer?

Guyer—Yes, and some of their wedding presents were cruel insinuations.

Gunner—What did they receive?

Guyer—Sixteen waste baskets embellished with ribbons.

FARMS AND FARMERS



New Farm Products.

Alfalfa was an unknown crop a few years ago. Now it is one of the most reliable and profitable of Texas crops. It has not been long since the onion was produced only in a few short rows for family use. Now the onion crop is one of Texas' best advertisements. The effort to raise for the market medicinal plants began with one enterprising citizen of Grayson County only a few years ago. Now this line is being taken up and will be carried on for all it is worth. The list is growing longer, and the prices of cotton and other farm products are better than they used to be, and the man with the hoe is growing more independent. The sugar beet is now being tested. Colorado holds first place in the production of beet sugar in the United States, with 422,732,530 pounds of sugar from 138,363,366 acres, while Michigan and California are closely matched for second place, producing 165,000,000 and 164,000,000 pounds, respectively. The sugar beet crop in this country last year brought \$4,500,000.

The present year will be an important season for experiments with the sugar beet in Texas. Let the tests be made under as good conditions as possible. There is really no doubt as to the results in localities where the soil is of the right density and quality. Lands that produce fine crops of beets of the ordinary variety or the "biggest turnips in the world" are quite sure to break a few records in sugar beets if given a fair test.—Galveston News.

Improved Chicken Coop.

The diagram shows a convenient way to make a coop for the poultry yard, of which the special feature is its door. Procure a box of the right dimensions and saw a hole, d, in one end. Then strengthen the box with narrow strips of wood, b, c, on each side of the hole.



HINGED DOOR FOR A COOP.

b, c. This acts as a groove for the door, a, to slide in. Thus you have a sliding door, which opens and shuts with the greatest ease. The front of the coop is inclosed with lath, or narrow strips, placed 2 1/2 to 3 inches apart. The top should be covered with a good grade of roofing paper to make it waterproof. A coop of this sort should be 2 to 2 1/2 feet long, 16 inches deep and not less than 20 inches high, while 2 feet would be better.—Richard Moncreux, in Farm and Home.

The Judge and \$1 Wheat.

Maud Miller, in the summer's heat, baked the meadow thick with wheat.

The judge rode slowly down the lane, Smoothing his horse's chestnut mane.

"With wheat at a dollar per," said he, "This maid is about the size for me."

Then he smiled at her and she blushed at him, And over the meadow fence he climbed.

"Will you marry me, sweet maid?" he said, And she told him "Yes," and they were wed.

Alas for maiden, alas for judge, For old designer and wheat-field drudge.

Lord pity them both and pity us all, For Maud didn't own the wheat at all.

And the judge remarked when he learned of the cheat:

"Don't talk to me about dollar wheat!" —San Francisco Argonaut.

How Animals Doctor Themselves.

Man might often take from the lower animals a lesson as to the cure of himself when ill. All sorts of animals suffering from fever eat little, lie quiet in dark, airy places and drink quantities of water. When a dog loses his appetite he knows where to find chlorelent—dog grass—which acts as a purgative and emetic. Sheep and cows, when ill, seek certain herbs. Any animal suffering from chronic rheumatism keeps as far as possible in the sun. If a chimpanzee be wounded he has been seen to stop the bleeding by a plaster of chewed up leaves and grass.

Farm Hints.

The horse is man's best friend, therefore he is deserving of a friend's treatment.

Don't forget that the barnyard manure is the best all-round fertilizer you can obtain.

Pasture makes the cheapest hog feed on the farm and clover makes the best hog pasture.

Don't let money act as a padlock on your heart and shut in all the kindness and happiness.

The animal that has a full, bright eye is apt to be healthy. And a moist nose is another indication of health.

The man who keeps his troubles to himself is better thought of than he who burdens his neighbors with them. The neighbors have their own troubles to think about.

Little things on the farm amount to as much in the end as they do in any other business, yet the farmer as a rule does not pay as much attention to details as does the city business man.

THE WEEKLY HISTORIAN



- 1552—Council of Trent prorogued.
- 1607—Hudson sailed on his first voyage of discovery.
- 1704—First issue of the Boston News Letter, the first American newspaper.
- 1707—Allied English, Dutch and Portuguese forces defeated by the French and Spanish at battle of Almansa.
- 1796—Demerara taken by Great Britain.
- 1805—Derne, Tripoli, captured by American marines.
- 1821—The Greek Patriarch put to death at Constantinople.
- 1834—The Quadruple treaty established the right of Isabella to the throne of Spain.
- 1836—Battle of San Jacinto.
- 1846—Earl of Cathcart appointed governor of Canada.
- 1851—First Canadian postage stamp issued.
- 1859—The French army defeated the Annam troops, 10,000 strong.
- 1863—Mail steamer Anglo-Saxo wrecked off Cape Race, with loss of 237 lives.
- 1868—Charles Dickens left the United States for home.... United States government concluded a treaty of peace with the Sioux Indians.
- 1876—Queen Victoria declared Empress of India.
- 1897—Grant's tomb, Riverside Park, New York, dedicated.
- 1898—Matanzas, Cuba, bombarded by American squadron under Admiral Sampson.... Spain declared a state of war existed with the United States.... Beginning of the Spanish American War.... American squadron under Dewey defeats Spanish fleet at Manila.
- 1900—Attempt to blow up the gates of the Welland canal.
- 1907—Treaty of peace between Britain and Nicaragua signed at Amsh.

FOREIGN

In the Canadian Senate at Ottawa Senator McDonald of British Columbia offered a resolution declaring the migration of Hindoos should be limited as much as possible, and the Canadian government should invite the aid of the imperial government to limit the number. Senator Scott said the Canadian government sent Mackenzie King, deputy minister of labor, to England for that purpose. This satisfied Senator McDonald and he withdrew his resolution.

The London Times, in an editorial on President Roosevelt's message on socialism, says that the President has entered upon a campaign that will command sympathy and moral support of the civilized world. Fuller particulars of his proposals, says the Times, will be available with the deepest interest in all circles of the world, and whatever may be thought of the prospects of the struggle with this terrible evil honest men everywhere will wish him victory in the end.

The Chinese money changers of Hong Kong are supporting the existing boycott against the Japanese which has come into existence as a result of the Tientsin incident by refusing to accept Japanese bank notes even at a discount. The syndicate's guild also has joined in the movement and members are making good use of money as security of their good faith. The deposits of members who do not believe in the boycott are to be forfeited to the self-government society.

A Manila dispatch reports an agreement between American troops and the stability, and Moro outlaws near Lanao, a town on the island of Mindanao. Members of the constabulary are reported killed and three soldiers wounded. A column composed of a battalion of Fifteenth Infantry and constabulary under command of Col. Davis has been following a band of outlaws and it is assumed that they overtook them and engagement ensued.

Australia's apprehension in the case of possible aggression on the part of Japan was voiced at the meeting held in London of the Australasian chamber of commerce by Thomas Price, president of South Australia. Mr. Price was expressing the necessity of Great Britain giving a more tangible proof of her interest in the colonies and favored the organization of a large federal citizen army in Australia.

The French cruiser Cassard has been ordered to the coast of Morocco to rescue the crew of the French fishing vessel Baleine, who were recently captured by Moors near Cape July.

At the trial of the nine members of the sect known as "dreamers" who had been down John Lehr's home south of the line Hat, Can., it was revealed that members of the order had, upon instructions of their leader, who, Lehr refused to join the congregation, ordered his followers to destroy Lehr's home and slay his family at will, "because he was heretic."